

**NOVA SCOTIA REGULATORY AND APPEALS BOARD**



**IN THE MATTER OF THE MOTOR CARRIER ACT**

**-and-**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE MOTOR VEHICLE TRANSPORT ACT**

**-and-**

**IN THE MATTER OF A MOTOR CARRIER TECHNICAL CONFERENCE** to  
address Minimum Rates for Highway Motor Coaches for the years 2026 and 2027

**BEFORE:**  Julia E. Clark, LLB, Vice Chair  
 Richard J. Melanson, LL.B., Member

**DECISION AND ORDER**

The Board initially established minimum rates for Highway Motor Coaches (defined as “a 47-58 passenger vehicle which has three axles and a washroom”) in 2015, following a Technical Conference. These rates were based on the minimum costs required to provide services with Highway Motor Coaches in a safe and reliable manner.

The last Decision and Order related to minimum rates for Highway Motor Coaches was issued in the Motor Carrier Technical Conference proceeding (M11011) on March 23, 2023.

That Decision and Order provided that a Technical Conference and hearing would be held in 2025, to address minimum rates for Highway Motor Coaches for the years 2026 and beyond.

The Board initiated the process to organize a Technical Conference by letter dated April 2, 2025.

Five of the seven parties invited to the Technical Conference, owning approximately 97% of the Highway Motor Coaches authorized under motor carrier licenses in Nova Scotia, advised that they had reached a consensus. The Board determined that this matter would be decided by a paper hearing.

The five parties invited to the Technical Conference who reached consensus have recommended the following:

1. That the minimum rates for Highway Motor Coaches, for the years 2026 and 2027 be set as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Daily Rate</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Kilometre Live</b>	<b>Deadhead</b>
Current	\$1575.00	\$185.00	\$3.65	\$3.35
2026	\$1630.00	\$190.00	\$3.80	\$3.50
2027	\$1685.00	\$195.00	\$3.95	\$3.65

Under the Board's direction, the Notice of Proposed Minimum Rates for Highway Motor Coaches for the years 2026 and 2027 was published in the Royal Gazette on June 4, 2025, posted on the Board's website and forwarded to local carriers by email, fax or letter. Notice was further provided directly to the two motor carriers who had not joined in the consensus recommendation.

No objections to the Notice of Proposed Minimum Rates for Highway Motor Coaches for the years 2026 and 2027 were received by the Board by the stated deadline of June 18, 2025.

The Board considered the Minimum Rates and filed information by way of a paper hearing on June 19, 2025.

Having considered the relevant legislative framework, including the factors set out in s. 13 of the *Motor Carrier Act*, the Board finds it is in the public interest to approve the Minimum Rates.

**The Board orders that:**

1. This Decision and Order shall apply to all carriers operating Highway Motor Coaches in Nova Scotia and their Motor Carrier and/or Extra Provincial Operating Licenses shall be amended accordingly. The Board reserves the jurisdiction to consider any case-specific evidence which the Board finds justifies a variation, including its findings herein, or in any further Order of the Board upon application by a carrier.
2. As established by the Decision and Order dated March 20, 2015, in the Discount Review Hearing (M04994), no carrier may offer a discount of more than 20% for a Highway Motor Coach. In no event shall a carrier charge an amount less than the Minimum Rates for Charter Service and the terms and conditions as set out in the attached Appendix A (Minimum Rates).
3. Any carrier having a licensed rate(s) below the Minimum Rates shall have the applicable rate(s) increased to the extent required to comply with the Minimum Rates.
4. The Minimum Rates apply to all new bookings for 2026 and 2027 from the date of this Decision and Order.
5. A carrier must not quote below the Minimum Rates for the year in which a Charter Service is to be provided, regardless of when the request for services or the booking is made.
6. Carriers are not permitted to enter into contracts for charters occurring beyond December 31, 2027, without specifying in the contract that the rate may change, subject to the Board setting the Minimum Rates for Highway Motor Coaches for 2028 or later.
7. The Board directs that the next Technical Conference(s) and hearing of the Board to set Minimum Rates for Highway Motor Coaches for the years 2028 and beyond shall be held in the Spring of 2027.
8. Any carrier having approved discounts for vehicle types other than Highway Motor Coaches, may apply the discount up to 20% provided all charges do not fall below the Minimum Rates.

9. Subject to the maximum discount of 20% and Minimum Rates, carriers have the flexibility of requesting their licensed rates and discounts for their services.
  10. For greater certainty, sections 13 and 14 from the Order issued March 20, 2015 (Matter M04994), remain in effect.
  11. This Decision and Order is effective immediately.
- DATED** at Halifax, Nova Scotia this 19th day of June 2025.

*Pamela McGarrigle*

Clerk of the Board

## APPENDIX “A”

### Terms and Conditions:

**Minimum Rates:** Subject to any case-specific evidence which the Board finds justifies a variation, no carrier, after the date of this Order, may operate at rates below the following, taking into consideration all other rates or charges of its license, including, but not limited to, discounts and a negative Fuel Adjustment Mechanism (“FAM”):

Year	Daily Rate	Hourly Rate	Kilometre Live	Deadhead
Current	\$1575.00	\$185.00	\$3.65	\$3.35
2026	\$1630.00	\$190.00	\$3.80	\$3.50
2027	\$1685.00	\$195.00	\$3.95	\$3.65